

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE CLAIMS

New claims 33-47 have been added to more clearly recite the distinguishing features of the present invention. More specifically, new claims 33-44 have been added to recite the features of the first through fourth embodiments. In particular, new independent claim 33 essentially recites the features of the system of the first embodiment, new dependent claims 34-38 depending from new claim 33 essentially recite the features of the system of the second, third and fourth embodiments, and new claims 39-44 recite a method corresponding to the systems recited in new claims 33-38. Still further, new claims 45-47 have been added recite features of the fifth embodiment.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-10 and 12-32 were all rejected either under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 6,253,214 ("Hall et al") or under

35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of Hall et al and USP 5,901,228 ("Crawford"). These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to new claims 33-47.

The object of the systems and methods of the present invention as recited in new claims 33-47 is to achieve the work of backup by connecting a medical institution to a server system for data storage over a communication line, without requiring a user to even be conscious of the backup.

In particular, according to the systems and methods of the present invention as recited in the new claims, data can be automatically backed up and stored at a low cost without the necessity to provide a large-scale server for a particular medical institution. In this connection, it is noted that the systems and methods of the claimed present invention are adapted for use by a plurality of medical institutions, and that use of a common storage server permits unification of forms of medical records for individual medical institutions and common use of the medical records of each patient. In addition, the systems and methods of the claimed present invention are adapted to enable easy exchange of information with the entity that manages the server.

It is respectfully submitted that Hall et al and Crawford, taken singly or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or

suggest the claimed features of the present invention recited in new claims 33-47.

In particular, it is respectfully submitted that Hall et al and Crawford fail to disclose, teach or suggest a storage condition designating unit (or step) for use in designating a condition for storage in the medical data storage unit and a controller (or control step) for controlling a data-stored state of the medical data storage unit according to the designated condition for storage, as according to the present invention as recited in new independent claims 33 and 39. And it is also respectfully submitted that Hall et al and Crawford also fail to disclose, teach or suggest a distributing unit (or step) which, after a medical data storage unit receives primary information transmitted from a medical institution terminal unit, distributes the primary information to at least one of a plurality of terminals for examining contents of the primary information, and an information examining terminal unit (or step) which examines the contents of the distributed primary information, generates secondary information including a response, and returns the secondary information to the medical data storage unit, as according to the present invention as recited in new independent claims 45 and 46.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the new claims patentably distinguish over the cited references,

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Response to Final Office Action

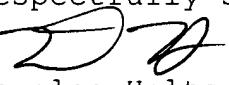
taken singly or in combination, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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encs.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-32 (Canceled)

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33. (New) A medical data preservation system comprising:  
a medical device which outputs electronic medical data  
including medical information having medical images and  
management information generated in a medical institution over a  
5 communication line;

a medical data receiver which automatically receives the  
electronic medical data after completion of an inspection over  
the communication line;

10 a medical data storage unit capable of storing the  
electronic data received by the medical data receiver;

a storage condition designating unit for use in designating  
a condition for storage in the medical data storage unit; and

15 a controller for controlling a data-stored state of the  
medical data storage unit according to the condition for storage  
designated by the storage condition designating unit.

34. (New) The system according to claim 33, wherein the  
electronic medical data is stored by a controller both in the  
medical data storage unit and in an external recording medium in  
accordance with the storage condition designated by the storage  
5 condition designating unit.

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35. (New) The system according to claim 33, wherein the electronic medical data is stored as medical-record-formed medical information data in the medical data storage unit by the controller in accordance with the storage condition designating unit.

36. (New) The system according to claim 35, wherein the medical-record-formed medical information data is outputted in accordance with individual patient identifying information included in the management information.

37. (New) The system according to claim 36, further comprising a converter which converts the outputted medical-record-formed medical data into a patient-understandable form.

38. (New) The system according to claim 37, wherein the patient-understandable form is one of: (i) printed and mailed to the patient and (ii) transmitted via a terminal having the individual patient identifying information.

39. (New) A medical data preservation method comprising: generating electronic medical data including medical information having medical images and management information;

5       outputting the electronic medical data over a communication  
line;

automatically receiving the electronic medical data over the  
communication line after completion of an inspection;

storing the received medical data in a medical data storage  
unit;

10       designating a condition for storage in the medical data  
storage unit; and

controlling a data-stored state of the medical data storage  
unit according to the designated condition for storage.

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40. (New) The method according to claim 39, wherein the  
electronic medical data is stored both in the medical data  
storage unit and in an external recording medium in accordance  
with the designated storage condition.

41. (New) The method according to claim 39, wherein the  
electronic medical data is stored as medical-record-formed  
medical information data in the medical data storage unit in  
accordance with the designated storage condition.

42. (New) The method according to claim 41, wherein the  
medical-record-formed medical information data is outputted in

accordance with individual patient identifying information included in the management information.

43. (New) The method according to claim 42, wherein the outputted medical-record-formed medical information data is converted into a patient-understandable form.

44. (New) The method according to claim 43, wherein the patient-understandable form is one of: (i) printed and mailed to the patient and (ii) transmitted via a terminal having the individual patient identifying information.

45. (New) A medical data preservation system comprising:

a medical institution terminal unit capable of transmitting and receiving information over a communication line;

5 a medical data storage unit capable of transmitting and receiving information over the communication line;

a distributing unit which, after the medical data storage unit receives primary information transmitted from the medical institution terminal unit, distributes the primary information to at least one of a plurality of terminals for examining contents 10 of the primary information; and

an information examining terminal unit which examines the contents of the distributed primary information, generates

secondary information including a response, and returns the secondary information to the medical data storage unit.

46. (New) A medical data preservation method comprising:  
transmitting primary information from a medical institution  
terminal unit over a communication line;  
receiving the primary information transmitted over the  
5 communication line in a medical data storage unit;  
distributing the primary information to at least one of a  
plurality of terminals which examines contents of the primary  
information;  
examining the contents of the distributed primary  
10 information and generating secondary information including a  
response; and  
returning the secondary information to the medical data  
storage unit.

47. The method according to claim 46, further comprising  
transmitting the secondary information returned to the medical  
data storage unit to the medical institution terminal unit which  
has transmitted the primary information.